Susan Baker
3200 Ellerslie Ave.
Baltimore Md 21218
301-243-4863

see back for letter

file under ads we've had see p. 3

1973

A Lesbian Newsletter

I saw you in a crowd one day
my eyes following your every move
wishing you would come near
dreading it if you would
you go by me, to touch you I want
but I do not dare
the savory smell of your body
played around my nose, enticing me
I'll always remember you

It's been days since I've seen your face
but somehow you're still here
within me, soaked into my soul
still hoping to see you again

My fantasies have taken over
you are with me always
turning with me in my sleep
laughing crying having fun
making love, you and me
we are now as one

Time has passed on
it's been days since I've seen your face
felt the soothing touch of your hands
felt the warmth of your body
your image is slipping away
no longer do you have a face
in my dreams you are only
something missing I've been looking for
in reality you are something I need.

by Denny

Logo Contest

Desperate Living, desperately needs a logo or masthead (a picture or desigr containing the words DESPERATE LIVING) to go on the front cover. So we are sponsoring a logo contest. All entries should be in black and white.

GRAND PRIZE

A date with any member of the staff. Send entries to:
Desperate Living
c/o Susan Baker
3200 Ellerslie Ave.
Baltimore, Md 21218

STATEMENT of PURPOSE

Desperate Living is a newsletter published by Baltimore lesbians.The purpose of the newsletter is to provide a place where lesbian women can share their thoughts and their creative work; and find out about the events and projects which concern them both locally, and nationally.We will try to print anything that relates to lesbians as long as we feel it is not oppressive; such as statements which are racist. classist. or sexist

Desperate Living will not succeed without your help and support. We need that help and support in the form of subscriptions, donations, ads, articles, poetry, letters and art work--whatever you have to share. If there is something about the newsletter that you like or don't like, let us know. We are open to suggestions and criticism.

We are trying to support the newsletter through ads rather than charging for the paper. So if you want to advertise something or just give us money, please do.

DESPERATE LIVING
STAFF
Susan Baker
Sandy Covahey
Fran
Barbara Shreeve

We welcome all materials:articles, poems,letters,and art work.We especially need art work.

Send all your inquires, submissions, etc.to:
Desperate Living
c/o S.Baker
3200 Ellerslie
Balt.,Md.,21218

ART COLLECTIVE

The Baltimore Women's Art Collective is composed of both gay and straight women who are interested in the arts and in sharing and learning with one another.These interests include: photography,jewelry,weaving, handicrafts,needlework,sketching, painting,drawing,pottery,etc.

The purpose of the Art Collective is to provide a place and free atmosphere where women can exchange ideas and work at their crafts.It is a channel of learning;a place where you can create as well as appreciate your sister's talents.

If interested call Karen at the Women's Center,weekdays between 12-4, at 366-6475

WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL

every Tue. 6:30-8pm.starting the first week in June, at Elementary School 51, across from the Stadium.
For more info call 467-4676

GAY AA

Baltimore's first Gay Alcoholics Annonymous group meets each Tuesday at 8:30 at the First Unitarian Church.Entrance to the Parish House is at 1 W. Hamilton Street.The group is organized by and for homosexual alcoholics in an effort to meet the unique needs of gay people within the framework of Alcoholics Anonymous. For further info.call 467-4667 (ed.note-group is half women.)

PRINT by MEEJUM, NORTH CAROLINA

FIRST THINGS FIRST

Is a women's book ordering house. Books(posters,etc.) on, for, by, about women.
Send 25¢ for a list of recently published feminist books.

ORDER NOW
c/o Sojourner Truth
23 7th St., S.E.
Washington,D.C.,20003
202-546-4951

Unique in listing books and getting whatever you order.

ANGER AT A STRAIGHT SOCIETY

Damn a society that so suppresses a minority group; no, human being, that at times love does not conquer wilting looks, at times even takes the pride out of walking down the street with the hand of the woman I love in mine. Damn me for pretending to unconsciously hold a cigarette or have a cold hand. Damn me for not looking people in the eye defiantly and proudly showing the world I love her. Damn me for the cowardice and damn you for making it be this way. I am not spineless. Why am I so small that I sometimes show my love for her only in the back streets and alleys where other people are not apt to be. Our love isn't sordid; don't make me feel that it is or deny it all together. I lived in your world and accepted all of you. Why can't I live in my world and have you accept me?

Wanda Antone

DIANA PRESS
12 W. 25th St.
Baltimore, Md. 21218
Printing, Typesetting
Layout, Graphics

Lesbian Printshop 301 366-9262

Facts Between the Sheets

or: "they are killing us before our time"

We are lesbians and we are proud. We are proud and it shows. People have only to look at us on the streets, in the bars; or playing basketball, football, and softball to know what that means. Each of us, whether or not we think of ourselves as being butch, is the biggest, baddest, stompingest woman ever to hit the face of the earth. And we take care of our own.

Some of us are also beginning to realize that we have potential political power. What that means is that we have the potential to control the direction our society takes. Our society, capitalism, is based on the domination of one person by another. When the person with power says jump, the person without power better damned sight jump or else! There is a pecking order of power and women are on the bottom which means that women end up doing one hell of a lot of jumping.

Women have always been thought of or defined on the basis of how they serve men; whether as wife, mother or shit worker (secretary, waitress). Every man has his own personal slave--his woman. As women we have been taught to mistrust each other and to fight each other for the one man who will "take care of us." As lesbians we have rejected this garbage. We define ourselves in terms of women. Our lives revolve around caring for women; not serving men.

C. L.

WHY THEY HATE US

Check it out. Magazines, television, radio and movies tell us that every woman is happily married with two and one-half children, a dog a washing machine and a station wagon. There is no such thing as a woman without a man. Women who don't have one yet, desperately want one. (It's better to get one before pregnancy--like chickenpox.)

Todays family serves to keep almost half of the population in the home and off the job market. It also creates free labor in the form of housework. The average wife works 80 hours a week in return for room, board, and whatever else her master chooses to grant her. Meanwhile, her unpaid labor frees the man to work on the outside and make as much money--for himself--as he can. The family also helps keep unhappy workers from raising a stink because no matter how much shit a man has to take at work, he can always go home and take his anger out on his own personal slaves, his wife and his children.

This is a great system--for men--and they don't want to see it change. By holding the purse strings they chain women to them.

Even when women work outside the home they don't make as much money as men. One third of the people who work in this country

are women. We earn 60¢ for every $1.00 that a man makes. The average woman earns $600.00 below the federal poverty level: and that figure doesn't include farm work, domestic work or waitressing which is written off as part time or temporary help.

Women also make up most the standby or reserve labor force. In peacetime we're told that we can't do alot of things because they are not feminine-we might get our hands dirty. Then all of a sudden in wartime it's okay for us to be mechanics, welders or carpenters. It all depends on what men need at the time to make money.

The top bosses who benefit from all this, not that <u>all</u> men don't benefit, need a reason to keep shitting on working women and that reason is the lie of women's roles. They say things like, "There is no sense training a woman- she'll only get pregant or married"; or "Women can't do this kind of work-they're just not strong enough and besides they're too unstable and emotional.

Lesbians are the place where all this falls apart. Our energy goes to ourselves and other lesbians, not to one man and his offspring. We don't have a man around "to take care of us", and we sure as hell don't want or need one. We have to work all our lives to survive. By our very existence we are a living contradiction to the American idea of the whimpering, feminine woman who always has to have a man around to lean on.

Men can't afford to have us around because we knock holes in their economic system. They have to try to deny our existence and to do that they have to make sure that they keep us quiet and out of sight. One way they do this is by making sure we spend most of our time just trying to make enough money to keep going. (For every lesbian there are at least three women would leave their men if they thought they could make enough money to survive on their own.)

He must maintain the myth that we are sick. A "normal" woman would want to serve him. He must make it almost impossible, economically and psychologically, for us to be honest about who we are. And if that doesn't work he will bombard our communitty with drugs (such as smack, quods, and downers) or lock us up in his greatest institutions, the insane asylum or jail.

THE NEXT STEP

One way that men in power maintain their control is to try to give each group in our society another group to hate and look down on. Race and class divisions are a creation of male society so that everyone will have someone else to look down on and feel "better" than. Thinking in terms of class and race and acting out classist and racist thoughts only serves to keep us apart and weak. In order for us to have a strong movement of lesbians, we must stop looking down on women because of their race or class. But as long as white middle class women continue to hold on to the power they have gotten from being white and middle class, us poor or black women won't have much to do with them. (Even though white and middle class women gain personal privilege from race and class divisions, the real winners are the men who run this society.) The first thing that we must do is to eliminate racist and classist behavior and the power gained from such behavior.

Whether we like it or not, our lives are controlled by men and the male culture they've created. Men hate lesbians because they are scared shitless of us. They know that if women ever got together they could destroy men's power and their male run society. Lesbians represent everything men hate and they will do everything possible to destroy us and keep us quiet. (How many lesbians have they already thrown in reform schools, jails and mental hospitals, just for being gay? How many lesbians commit suicide, become drug addicts or alcoholics, or spend their whole lives hid-

ing their real identities and "passing" as straight because they've felt the power of our male society with its schools, churches, doctors, courts and bosses?) It is up to us to decide who we are and how we are going to live--not men and their culture which tries to keep us quiet by telling us that we are sick perverts who need to be locked up. If we want to survive we've got to stop running from ourselves and each other, and we've got to stop right now.

Susan Baker
Sandy Covahey

The Liberalsexuals

Oh those gentle men,
So in touch with their confusion.
When we were younger we called it
Their prick.

The Bisexuals

Who did you go to bed with today?
Yesterday?
If one was a man and one was a woman,
You fucked a woman.

Song of a Hatehersexual

It wasn't much improvement on a tampax.

Susan Baker

PALM OF YOUR HAND

a new collection of writings and drawings by lesbians from Baltimore and other cities.$1. Available at the Women's Center The Satellite,The Shot Tower, John Cach's,Sherman's,New Era Book Store.Also available in Washington.

we take ads

Mother, you gave birth to me,
Now you say you wish I wasn't born
You say you don't have any children
You say where did I go wrong,
Where did I fail as a mother?

Mother, you gave birth to me.
I'm your daughter.
You didn't go wrong
You didn't fail.
I need your understanding
I need a mothers love
I need my mother's love and understanding.
Yes mother you have a daughter
But your daughter
Is a lesbian.
So society disowned me
My mother disowned me
But my lover still loves me.
My woman she knows.
For mother there are others
They are all just about like me
Disowned, unloved,
Mostly misunderstood.

Chris Hearn

HERA

Oh, god, I am so tired,
Tired of the battles and the pain of loneliness.
But someone reached her hand out to me,
Her hand, loving, accepting, with no conditions, my imperfections,
as I cannot.
I dream.
My sister, great goddess Hera, where are you?
Come to me, I need you,
To heal the pain of past millenium of being pushed down,
And separated from you by those who live
In mortal fear of your power,
Which is love,
Which they cannot know.

Susan Houstle

"CALL ME GEORGIO"

Waif eyed,
Black vested-skinny spic,
Becoming the greaser they wouldn't let
you be,
Ten years too late.

Laughing on the stoop.
G.S. 10's hurry by, watching
You watching.
"Paula said that Thelma said that--"
Camp was made for survival,
Because the world seen through the
bottom of a wine bottle,
Is also reflected.

Someday they will snuff you out
Because you can not be marketed,
And will not consume.
It is not the content.
It is only the packaging;
And you have thin wrappings.

You change your name
From Debbie, to Georgio, to Jeannie Metcalf.
"Funny, you don't look like a Metcalf."
Yet you remain constant,
A waif eyed,
Black vested-skinny spic,
A baby butch, your own begetting.

Mazeltov; It's a girl.

Susan Baker

Dear Diary,

"...the whole fucking world is carding me for a haircut."

We went to get our hair cut today. We didn't go to the beauty school. Last time we went there, everything was really fucked up. The student who cut my hair thought I was a boy. When I sat down she asked her instructor whether she should use a razor or scissors. So I said "use scissors." She laughed at me. After all, what do boys know about having their hair cut? As she was cutting my hair, she was carrying on a conversation with another student. Let me tell you my hair is proof that she was much more involved in her conversation. Anyway they were talking and she said "Oh Joan all men act dumb like that". I don't know what they had been talking about, but I thought her statement about was true and funny. Then she turned and looked at me and said, "Aren't they?" meaning aren't they including me as one of those dumb men. Then she started talking about how short was becoming the style for men. She pointed at me and said, "Like him. He's getting his hair cut way short."

We decided to try another beauty school because schools charge less money than other places. The place where we went was much smaller and seemed to have a regular groups of clients. When we walked in, every eye in the place turned to look. The woman at the desk told us that the school was only open to women. Sandy was cool--"We are women." The woman said, "Oh, okay. It's hard to tell these days." While I was in the middle of thinking, "Jesus, not more of this shit." she

turned full face to me; "And you have to be over 21". I was not cool,"I am over 21." No response. Then I figured it out, finally figured it out: identification, driver's license, birth certificate: the fucking world is carding me for a hair cut!!!

The instructor and two students talked to Sandy about how she wanted her hair cut. They spent awhile saying, "You want a shag. Is that what you mean?" "No, I don't want a shag. I want you to cut here and in the back and thin my hair. It's too long in front too." "You want a shag, is that right?" "No, I don't want a shag." By the time anyone in the place understood that she was no sweet hippie who wanted to look cute--not that anyone ever thought that--I guess they just figured if she wasn't a man, she was some kind of a weird woman--so why not a hippie?--at least that looks female; certainly she wanted to look female. Anyway, by this time I had developed a bad cold--probably pneumonia--from sitting around with a wet head. My student hair-cutter (of course the only prick in the place) couldn't begin hair cutting until the instructor got done with Sandy. Shit, I was getting so pissed: me and this prick faggot waiting around my wet head while my lover sits 2 chairs away trying to get straight women to take their eyes off her breasts, stop thinking she's a man--"They sure looked like men when they came in, but

this one's got breasts")and just cut her hair.

Finally it ended.We were leaving.Wanting a cigarette so bad.As we walked out,these young hippie pricks come down the street feeling real hip and free-loving.They give us a big smile:"Hey you got an extra cigarette?"

"Fuck off."

"What?"

Sandy repeats,"Fuck off." They were very upset those free loving men,very upset, also stunned beyond speaking. We kept walking.Then I heard, "Pricks,You bastard pricks."

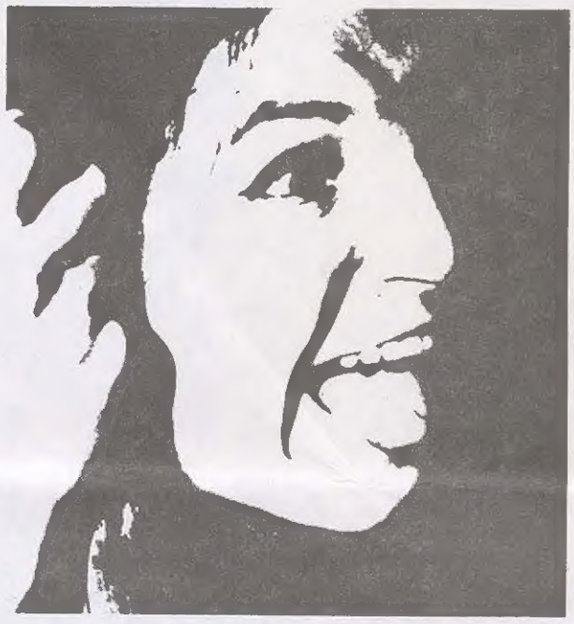
Sandy said,"Did you hear that?"It was real.Now the fucking pricks of the world are calling us "pricks". It's all too much.

Dear Desperate Living,

After a year of loneliness isolation and frustration I came out as a lesbian. I did this because I could no longer force myself to date men, kiss men or play their silly cat and mouse games. I have been out now for ten months and have stopped relating to men almost totally. Before I came out I felt like I was the only lesbian in the whole world, now most of my friends are lesbians and I know that I am not and will never be alone again. These past ten months have been both happy and sad. Happy because I am able to express my feelings, both mentally and physically to a woman; and sad because I can not tell my straight friends and relatives. I feel that right now I should not tell those who would put me down, because it would not accomplish a thing. In spite of the struggles of being a lesbian, I am much happier now than I was when I was trying to be straight. Many people say that it's easier to go along with the majority than to join a minority. I tried to go along with the heterosexual society and I almost smothered myself. I think it is beautiful to be a lesbian. I could no longer force myself to be straight because I know that I was not and could never be so. I joined the so called minority, lesbians, and through them I gained strength, love and pride. And also a sense of how important it was for me to be honest with myself.

It's really a pity what this society has made the image of lesbians to be. If only everyone could think in terms of how beautiful and good it is to love. I find it hard to understand why some people find it a crime to relate sexually to the same sex. If you really love someome, their sex should not stand in the way. What matters most is that you love. I am happy and content with what I am, a lesbian, and I am proud of it to! Lesbians unite!

Lots of Love,
Fran



Kidding around, goofing off,
having fun
Laughing loud and unrestricted
Listening to the echoes of our
laughter
Smiling at each other, showing
our teeth
Giggling hideously, getting
cramps
Making faces, just having a
ball
I touch you. There is silence.

Denny

AVAILABLE AT SOME OF US PRESS 3126 24th ST. MID EASTERN MKT. PLACE NW. WASHINGTON DC

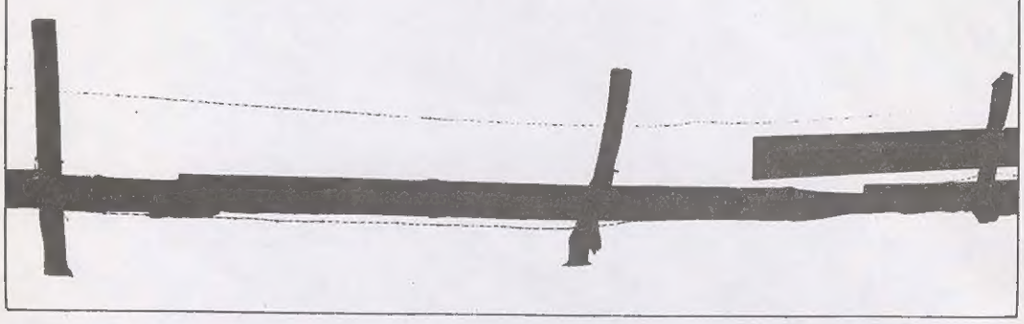
These Days
by lee lally
She's a Jim-Dandy
by susan baker
TWO POETRY BOOKS BY LESBIANS
also books by gay men

We forgot to talk about subscriptions to Desperate Living. They are $2.00 a year.

DANCE

June 9th 9pm
at the Women's Center
3028 Greenmount Avenue
(next to the People's Free Medical Clinic)
BYOB $1.00 Donation
Sponsored by the Balto. Rape Crisis Center

ads needed



in fact they are D.L.'s sole means of support. So please help. Rates are $6. per 3 in. sq. Extra if we design

bars

This list is for your convenience. It is not a complete listing. It is not recommending any particular bar or bars.

CLUB 900
900 E. Monument St.

HARBOR VIEW CAFE
1730 Thames Street
Baltimore, Md. 21231
732-9477

SATELLITE
701 S. Wolfe
Band plays on Sat.

IT'LL DO BAR
Corner of Lehigh & Eastern
Baltimore, Md., 21224
327-9561
(community bar- no hassles)

The HIPPO.
Corner of Eager & Charles

SADIES Sho BAR
702 S. Broadway
Rock-A-Jets play on Sat.

ZODIAC STAR LOUNGE
2306 Boston Street
Baltimore, Md.
Val sings on Sat.

7/5/73 - Susan - Enclosed you'll find a check for $2.00 - The best we can do for a "donation" at this point - Appreciated your notice in your first issue though cards addressed to Sojourner Truth may have zapped post office -

Wonder if you've got an issue two yet - We've never gotten it together to pay for advertising it ever gets done - Shouldn't promise at this point - but will try - Have heard your book is out - sneaked a look at the galleys at Lee's once - Haven't seen it yet though - will stock it - Take care Good Luck

6/5/73 Desparate Living

3200 Ellerslie Ave
Baltimore
21218

Dear Brook and Susan,

This is probably a bad way to hit you for an add. With your first announcement messed up. I'm really sorry about that.

Anyway, this is our first newsletter. We are going to try to go out ~~ass~~ every month. We want to distribute in the bars the way Gay Blade does, ~~and~~ An other words the paper will be free so we have to support ourselves with adds and contributions.

We were wondering if you would like us to put an ad in the next issue. ~~If so you~~ They cost $6 a 3 in sq, more if we have to design or typeset it. (type written adds just look poor.) If so you should send us the copy and check within the next two weeks.

We would have

liked to continue putting announcements for things like 1st Thing First in for free but we are already in debt to the printer so we had to draw a hard line and it came out anything that charges money whether it makes a profit or not.

Take care of yourselves and I hope the bookstore is doing o.k. Tell Trudy to fucking better get in touch with me. My # is 301-243-4863.

Brook, send us some poems or stories for the next issue. I promise we make a point of answering all contributions right away and explaining as honestly as we can why we did or didn't use them.

When is the next women's reading? School is almost over.

Love and things,
Susan Baker

P. S. If for some strange reason you want bulk copies we can work something out.